S. HRG. 99-88

NOMINATIONS OF PETER C. MYERS AND ROBERT L. THOMPSON

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

THE NOMINATIONS OF PETER C. MYERS, OF MISSOURI, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT AND ROBERT L. THOMPSON, OF INDIANA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR ECONOMICS

APRIL 22, 1985

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NOMINATIONS OF PETER C. MYERS AND ROBERT L. THOMPSON

MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1985

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:55 a.m., in room 328-A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Paula Hawkins presiding.

Present: Senator Hawkins.

STATEMENT OF HON. PAULA HAWKINS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator HAWKINS. The committee will come to order.

We're meeting this morning to consider two important appointments to the Department of Agriculture. These appointments are the nominations of Peter Myers to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment, and Dr. Robert L. Thompson, to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics.

Peter Myers is already a member of the USDA team. He currently serves as Chief of the Department's Soil Conservation Service, and has served in this position since April of 1982. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, and prior to joining the Department was a full-time farmer, operating a row crop and livestock farm in the Mississippi Delta area of southern Missouri.

Robert Thompson is also no stranger in this administration. He currently serves as senior staff economist for food and agriculture at the Council of Economic Advisers. He received his doctoral degree in agricultural economics from Purdue University in 1974, is a tenured professor at that institution, and is currently on leave of absence. We welcome you here today.

Any statements from other members of this committee will be entered into the record.

We first have a statement from Mr. Myers, who is accompanied by Senator Danforth.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN C. DANFORTH, A U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI

Senator DANFORTH. Madam Chairman, I am delighted to be here. Often we are invited as Senators from the State of a nominee to appear before a committee and say something on behalf of the

nominee. Sometimes we don't know the individual as well as we should.

In this case, I am truly very personally delighted to appear before the committee, and to give the committee some sense of my feelings with respect to Peter Myers.

I have known Peter Myers for some time. I would say more than a decade. I have been in his home. I know his son at least as well as I know him—in fact, I was with his son a couple of weeks ago in Sikeston, MO, where he is now practicing law, a young lawyer, in a very fine law firm in Sikeston.

Peter Myers is an outstanding person, and anybody who knows him would say that. He has been a very good and successful farmer in southeast Missouri. His family now continues to operate the farm and to live on it. He is a person who has not only been a good farmer, but he has been a good leader as well.

Peter has served on several farm organization boards; in addition to that, he was for a time on the Missouri Conservation Commission. The Missouri Conservation Commission is the pride of our State. The four-member commission runs the entire conservation department of the State of Missouri.

It has been a widely heralded conservation department, and the fact that Peter was appointed to the commission and served with distinction, I think, indicates the esteem with which he is held, not only in the agricultural community of our State, but by those who are interested in the subject of conservation.

Besides his ability, and his background, he is a first-rate human being. Peter is, as will appear to you shortly, an articulate person, a person who can converse very easily with a broad spectrum of people, certainly a man who can communicate very well with the agricultural community.

I am, as I said earlier, truly proud and pleased to be here before the committee to present Peter Myers.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you, Senator Danforth. That was a fine recommendation.

Senator DANFORTH. I will be happy to answer any probing questions as to Peter's background, and if you have none, I'm going to move on.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you, Senator. We'll excuse you at this time. We have only a few questions.

Mr. Myers, do you have any comments you would like to make for the record.

STATEMENT OF PETER C. MYERS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT-DESIGNATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Mr. MYERS. Madam Chairman, thank you.

I would like to elaborate a little bit on what you have said, and what my friend Senator Danforth said.

The Conservation Commission in Missouri did deal with fish and game and forestry, so that did provide me with some background for this job for which I have been nominated, Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, which is responsible for the Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service.

I don't pretend to be an expert forester; I don't pretend to be an expert soil conservationist, but I do know how to listen to people that are experts in this field.

I have been the Chief of the Soil Conservation Service for 3 years, and it's been kind of a unique opportunity. I think I have an insight into how an agency operates, and how the USDA operates that will help me greatly in my job as Assistant Secretary.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you very much. There are two formal questions which must be asked of the nominees.

No. 1, if your nomination is approved by the committee and the Senate, do you promise to respond to requests to appear and testify before this committee and any other duly constituted committee of the Senate?

Mr. MYERS. Yes, very definitely.

Senator HAWKINS. No. 2, if you are confirmed by the Senate, will you faithfully execute the laws passed by Congress regardless of any previous statements you may have made, or biases you may have held?

Mr. MYERS. Yes, I will.

[Questions from Senator Zorinsky to Mr. Myers and answers thereto:]

Question. First, would you describe your qualifications and experience in the area of Forestry?

Answer. I have served as one of four commissioners on the Missouri Conservation Commission which has responsibility for Fish, Game and Forestry in the State of Missouri. I have owned and managed 45 acres of bottomland hardwood on my farm in S.E. Missouri.

Further, as Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, I was responsible for program policy and funding decisions to improve forest lands, one of the resource concerns set forth in the 1982 National Conservation Program.

Question. Second, multiple-use of our nation's forestry resources is an objective that Congress has established in law and that should be a guide in all policy decisions made by the Forest Service. What is your opinion of the multiple-use objective and will you make certain that objective is considered when developing forestry policy?

Answer. I fully subscribe to this multiple use objective of our nation's forestry resources, and will make certain that objective is implemented in developing forestry policy for the land under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service.

Question. Under the Administration's proposed budget and the so-called Rose Garden budget compromise, funding for soil and water conservation programs would be below the minimum level called for by the Administration's National Conservation Plan—a plan that you were instrumental in developing. What is the purpose of having a National Conservation Plan if we are not going to provide the funds needed to implement the plan?

Answer. The National Conservation Plan provides long range objectives for our nation's soil and water conservation objectives. These objectives will be attained under reduced funding proposed by the administration because of:

(a) Many States which have strong soil and water programs.

(b) Continued adequate Federal funding for technical assistance which is the vehicle to transmit soil and water conservation information to farmers and ranchers.

(c) Rapid acceptance of conservation tillage and "no-till" by farmers. These tillage practices have proven to be the most cost-effective erosion control practice in reducing soil erosion and off-site damages caused by soil movement.

(d) Continued coordination of soil and water conservation programs among USDA agencies has resulted in common understandings and goals with respect to policy and the allocation of USDA resources to solving soil and water problems in America. The National Conservation Program serves primarily to guide policy. Funding projections within the document are a variable which depend on the state of the economy and the appropriations made available.

Question. By some estimates, a conservation reserve program would result in budget savings since surpluses would be reduced and commodity prices would be

strengthened. Will the Administration endorse a conservation reserve program if the net result is a reduced level of federal expenditures.

Answer. The Administration endorses the concept of a conservation reserve program for highly erodible cropland. If adequate funding can be justified in the current budget process, some form of conservation reserve may be considered.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you. We appreciate you appearing here today, and you may be excused at this time if you so desire.

At this time, we will hear from Congressman Martin who has come to recommend the nomination of Robert L. Thompson to be Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID O'B. MARTIN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE 26TH DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Mr. MARTIN. Thank you very much, Senator. Believe me, it's a privilege to see you again and to be back here.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here to introduce to you and the members of the committee Robert L. Thompson. He's from St. Lawrence County, NY, which also happens to be my home county.

I'm sure the record will indicate in his portfolio his impeccable academic qualifications. I rise above refusing to come here because I'm a Notre Dame graduate, and he received his doctorate at Purdue, but notwithstanding that—and he did his undergraduate work at Cornell—I don't think there's any question in anybody's mind about his qualifications for the job.

In addition, he brings not only that academic background, but the invaluable experience of having been brought up on a dairy farm—and not so incidentally a prize-winning dairy farm in St. Lawrence County. So he knows not only the academic but the practical aspects of farming.

This is going to be, I would think, one of our most important years, and a critical year for American agriculture. I think the Department's research and statistical work is going to play an indispensable part if we're going to be ultimately coming up with the right conclusions. We have to have the right information, and I think that Dr. Thompson will bring to that office the earnestness and the expertise and professionalism that we're all going to require.

So, I highly recommend him for the position that the President has nominated him for. I also want to point out that the first time I held political office on the St. Lawrence County Board, Bob's father, and I went on the board together. I can attest to their way of dealing with things in a practical matter. They have a background that comes from the soil, and he's the best we've got, Senator.

I don't know what else to say except that I highly recommend Bob Thompson to you.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you very much for that wonderful recommendation. You've both come highly recommended.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT L. THOMPSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR ECONOMICS-DESIGNATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dr. THOMPSON. It's an honor and a privilege for me to appear before you today.[1] Indeed, it's an honor to have been nominated for this position by President Reagan.

If confirmed, I feel I can fulfill an important role as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief economist.

I have been associated with the Federal Government for several years, both at the Department of Agriculture, and most recently at the Council of Economic Advisers, where I have been senior staff economist for food and agriculture policy.

In my professional work at Purdue, as well as at the Council, my main areas of responsibility have been agricultural trade policy, as well as United States domestic agricultural policy.

So, if confirmed in this position I would look forward to an association with this committee characterized by good working relationships and measurable progress as we all seek ways to best serve American agriculture.

I will attempt to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

Senator HAWKINS. I have no questions of you, except for the two formal questions that you heard me ask Mr. Myers.

If your nomination is approved by the committee and the Senate, do you promise to respond to requests to appear and testify before this committee and any other duly constituted committee of the Senate?

Dr. THOMPSON. Yes, I do.

Senator HAWKINS. If you are confirmed by the Senate, will you faithfully execute the laws passed by Congress regardless of any previous statements you may have made or biases you may have held?

Dr. THOMPSON. Yes.

[Questions from Senator Zorinsky to Dr. Thompson and answers thereto:]

Question. I am concerned that our Nation's unwillingness to adequately respond to the trade practices used by some of our competitors has caused us to lose agricultural export markets.

The Farm Bill I plan to introduce will have export promotion provisions that will enable the U.S. to offer some of the same incentives—including subsidies—that our competitors are offering. Do you support my position that more aggressive export promotion programs are needed?

Answer. It is important to note that not all of our competitors are subdisizing farm product exports. The European Community is the principal offender by maintaining import barriers and export subsidies while constituting a large market and a major competitor to the U.S. However, their total outlays for farm price and income support are about the same as in the U.S. for 1985.

Other grain-competing countries' policies tend to be more neutral towards exports. For instance, Canada and Australia employ policies, particularly for wheat, which are designed to insulate producer prices from movements in international prices. While both countries use marketing boards for export sales of wheat and other grain, sales are made at world market prices without the use of export subsidies. High U.S. loan rates provide a price umbrella under which these countries can sell all they want at a guaranteed price.

Still other countries provide disincentives to exports by means of export taxes and quotas. Argentina has export taxes on wheat, corn, sorghum, and soybeans. Brazil

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[1] See p. 8 for the prepared statement of Dr. Thompson.

maintains a differential tax policy that is used to promote exports of soybean products as opposed to soybeans. Export quotas are in effect for soybeans, meal, and oil.

More important, the use of overt export subsidies by the U.S. (the world's largest agricultural exporter) would likely invite retaliation, and U.S. agriculture could very easily be a net loser in a world trade war. In addition, if we begin to subsidize, would we subsidize to all destinations, including the USSR? If we subsidize to other countries but not the USSR, we may invite a significant loss of sales to that country.

U.S. agriculture, with its large export exposure, has much to gain from a freer and more open trading environment. As we approach the next round of multi-lateral negotiations, it would be quite inappropriate for the U.S. to now engage in the same type of measures we hope to get others to stop using.

Rather, there are two important key measures that need to be addressed this year in order to get U.S. agricultural exports moving again:

(1) Flexible loan rates established on the basis of recent market prices to permit our products to become more competitive on world markets;

(2) Federal budget deficits must be brought under control to permit interest rates and exchange rates to decline to more reasonable levels.

A lower value of the dollar and market-clearing loan rates are what is needed to restore U.S. agriculture's export markets—not export subsidies.

Question. There are many aspects about the so-called Rose Garden budget compromise that I cannot endorse. However, that compromise correctly notes that the 1981 Farm Bill—legislation authorizing a farm program endorsed by the Administration—was, and I quote, "the most expensive in history . . . and produced the worst results: virtual depression conditions in much of the U.S. agriculture," end of quote.

A few weeks ago, the Aministration sent up its version of a 1985 Farm Bill. Secretary Block testified that—under the Administration's proposal—farm income would be reduced during the next two years. It is reported in the media that this original proposal is being dropped by the Administration because it is too harmful to farmers.

Now, key elements of a revised Administration Farm Bill appear to be included as part of the Rose Garden budget plan. Can you provide farm income estimates based on this Rose Garden plan and can you assure us that if this plan is enacted that it will end the depression in the farm economy?

Answer. There is no one unique set of policy measures consistent with the proposed budget compromise. Rather a number of approaches would be possible. Because there is no one unique set of programs associated with the aggregate budget compromise outlay estimates, it is not possible to estimate the level of farm income associated with it.

However, once a set of policy measures is agreed to, the Department will then be in a position to provide farm income estimates.

[Question from Senator Alan Dixon to Mr. Thompson and answer thereto:]

Question. Mr. Thompson, I understand that you support the proposal to increase sugar imports if they are converted to invert sugar. It is my understanding that this would displace corn fructose syrup. What is your present position on this?

Answer. Although there are clearly arguments for and against the proposal, the proposal would interfere with the sugar program mandated by Congress in the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 and could increase the likelihood of forfeiture of sugar under loan to the Commodity Credit Corporation. For this reason, the Department of Agriculture does not support the proposal. In that connection, enclosed is a copy of a letter dated February 27, 1985, from Secretary Block to the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Senator HAWKINS. Thank you very much.

Senator Helms was called to the White House, so I was asked to be here. It is a great honor and a privilege for me to be here. Lack of attendance by the Senators is not due to lack of interest on their part—everyone's busy in budget meetings.

Thank you very much.

The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:07 p.m., the committee adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY,
Washington, DC, April 22, 1985.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
Washington, DC.

DEAR JESSE: I regret that I am not able to attend today's confirmation hearing for Mr. Robert Thompson, President Reagan's appointee as Assistant Secretary for Economics. I have the distinct honor of accompanying Secretary of State George Shultz who will be in Indiana on Monday on matters relating to the Pan American Games.

I have the highest confidence in Bob Thompson's abilities as an economist. His work with the Council of Economic Advisers was outstanding and some of his published material from that position has served as the foundation for a careful look at reforming U.S. agricultural policy.

Bob Thompson has served on the facility at Purdue University since 1974, where he has received numerous awards for his work and research in international trade policy.

While he has a keen sense of awareness to these macroeconomic problems, he was raised on a dairy farm in New York and certainly understands and sympathizes with the financial plight of the family farmer.

I hope this committee will move promptly to confirm his nomination with my highest recommendations. With continued best wishes.

Sincerely,

RICHARD G. LUGAR,
U.S. Senator.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAN QUAYLE, A U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Agriculture Committee, I would like to voice my strong personal support today for Dr. Robert L. Thompson, and suggest that we expedite his confirmation as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics.

I am especially proud to report that Dr. Thompson has spent much of his professional career in my home state of Indiana, as a professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University.

Robert Thompson's tremendous record of achievement includes a unique and valuable array of private, academic and governmental experience. He has literally traveled the globe in his work and study of world agricultural development.

Raised on a dairy farm in upstate New York, Thompson went on to Cornell University, where in 1967 he received his Bachelor of Science degree. While a junior at Cornell, he traveled to Denmark, where he studied under the auspices of the Scandanavian Seminar program.

From Cornell, Thompson moved to Indiana, where at Purdue he began his highly acclaimed academic career. At Purdue, Bob earned his Masters of Science degree, and in 1974, the Doctor of Philosophy.

But, Robert Thompson's experience is by no means limited to the classroom. From 1968 to 1970 he worked with the agricultural research and extension in Laos.

Other travels included a trip to Brazil, where he worked and wrote as a Visiting Professor.

Upon his return to the U.S., and after a brief service with the Department of Agriculture's International Economics Division, Thompson was off to Vienna, Austria, where, as a research scholar, he studied at the International Institute of Applied Sciences Analysis.

As is obvious, Dr. Robert Thompson's background is one of diversity and commitment to his profession of agricultural policy.

His work has been published in the American Journal of Agricultural Economics, the Oxford Economic Papers, the Journal of American Oil Chemists Society, and other publications, too numerous to mention.

As if this distinguished record were not enough, Dr. Thompson has applied his knowledge to practical application. He has served as a consultant for the United Nations, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Ford Foundation, the Inter-American Development Bank, and many others.

Most recently, Dr. Thompson has returned to Washington to provide his expertise for service to the President as a Senior Staff Economist for Food and Agricultural Policy on the President's Council of Economic Advisers.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I believe that Robert Thompson's outstanding record speaks for itself. During the coming year, Congress and the Executive Branch will closely examine policy alternatives toward construction of a new and comprehensive farm bill. As we do, we will surely need the input of Dr. Robert L. Thompson. I am pleased to echo the support and admiration of Dr. Thompson's colleagues in the academic, private, and governmental sectors.

Bob Thompson is truly qualified to assume the responsibilities of the position for which he has been nominated by the President of the United States, and I am glad to count myself among those in support of his confirmation.

STATEMENT OF DR. ROBERT L. THOMPSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR ECONOMICS-DESIGNATE

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and privilege for me to appear before you today. Indeed, it is an honor for me to have been nominated for this position by President Reagan. If confirmed, I feel I can fulfill an important role as USDA's chief economist to the food and agricultural sector, the Congress, and to the general economy as well.

I have been associated with the Federal Government for several years, both at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and at the Council of Economic Advisers.

To provide a brief biographical sketch for the record, I was born April 25, 1945 in upstate New York and raised on a dairy farm near Ogdensburg. My undergraduate degree was received from Cornell, and both my Masters and Doctor of Philosophy degrees are from Purdue. I joined the agricultural economics department at Purdue University in 1974, and was granted full professor status in July 1983.

In the late 1960's, I worked with agricultural extension and research services in Laos as a volunteer. I have served as a visiting professor at the Federal University of Vicosa in Brazil. In the summer of 1983, I was a research scholar at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Vienna, Austria.

My principal areas of work have been in agricultural trade policy, U.S. agricultural policy and world agricultural development.

If confirmed in this position, I look forward to an association with this committee that is characterized by good working relationships and measurable progress as we all seek ways to best serve American agriculture. I will attempt to answer your questions to the best of my ability, Mr. Chairman, Thank you.

PROFILE OF ROBERT L. THOMPSON

Robert L. Thompson, 40, was nominated March 20, 1985 by President Reagan to be Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For the previous 18 months, he has served as senior staff economist for food and agriculture on the President's Council of Economic Advisers while on leave from Purdue University. As a professor of agriculture economics at Purdue, Thompson's principal areas of work were in agricultural trade policy, U.S. agricultural policy, and world agricultural development.

Thompson was raised on a dairy farm in Ogdensburg, N.Y. He received his undergraduate degree from Cornell University. During his junior year, he studied in Denmark under the auspices of the Scandinavian Seminar program. He received both his master of science and doctor of philosophy degrees from Purdue.

From 1968–1970, Thompson worked with agricultural extension and research services in Laos as a volunteer with International Volunteer Services, Inc. In 1972 and 1973, he served as visiting professor at the Federal University of Vicosa in Brazil. During 1979–80, he was a visiting professor in the international economics division of USDA's Economic Research Service. In the summer of 1983, he was a research

scholar at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Vienna, Austria.

In 1982, he was the first recipient of Purdue's Agricultural Research Award, given each year for outstanding cumulative research contributions for the past 10 years.

Thompson has served as a consultant to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Center for Maize and Wheat Improvement, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Ford Foundation, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Brazilian Production Financing Commission, Agriculture Canada, Deere and Co., and the Southern Regional Council.

He has published extensively in a wide range of periodicals, including the American and Canadian Journals of Agricultural Economics, Oxford Economic Papers, Journal of Dairy Science, Journal of American Oil Chemists' Society, Soybean Digest, and Prairie Farmers, and in Portuguese in several Brazilian economics journals.

Thompson's memberships in professional organizations include the American Agricultural Economics Association, the American Economic Association, the International Association of Agricultural Economists, Sigma Xi, and Gamma Sigma Delta.

He is married to the former Karen Hansen of Bodilsker, Denmark. They live in Springfield, VA with their two children, Kristina, 12, and Eric, 10.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT,
Washington, DC, March 28, 1985.

Hon. JESSE A. HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by Robert L. Thompson,[1] who has been nominated by President Reagan for the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics, Department of Agriculture.

We have reviewed the report and have also obtained advice from the Department of Agriculture concerning any possible conflict in light of the Department's functions and the nominee's proposed duties. We enclose a copy of Mr. Thompson's letter to us dated March 25, 1985 in which he states that upon assuming Office he will recuse himself from any matter in his Department involving Purdue University and that he will resign as a member of the Editorial Council for the American Agriculture Economics Association and as a Director of the National Bureau for Economic Research.

Based on the foregoing, we believe that Mr. Thompson is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

DAVID H. MARTIN, *Director.*

Enclosures.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, DC, March 25, 1985.

Hon. DAVID H. MARTIN,
Director, Office of Government Ethics,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MARTIN: Enclosed is a copy of the SF 278, Financial Disclosure Report, for Robert L. Thompson,[1] nominee for Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics, which I have signed as this Department's designated agency official under the Ethics in Government Act of 1978. Enclosed as well is Dr. Thompson's letter to you of this date describing the steps he has agreed to take in order to avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest between his personal financial interests and the duties he will perform as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

Dr. Thompson is currently on leave from his position as a Professor at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, while serving on an Intergovernmental Personnel Act appointment as a Senior Staff Member of the Council of Economic Advisers. He intends to remain on leave without pay from his position as a Professor at Purdue, and to participate in no matters arising within this Department involving Purdue University, during his tenure as an Assistant Secretary in this Department. Dr. Thompson intends to resign from his membership on the Editorial Council for the American Agricultural Economics Association, and as a Director of the National Bureau for Economic Research, upon his confirmation as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

[1] Retained in committee files.

Based upon the information reported in Dr. Thompson's SF 278, and considering the steps he has agreed to take as outlined above in order to avoid any actual or apparent conflict of interest between his personal financial interests and the duties he will perform as an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, I believe that the report discloses no conflict of interest under applicable laws and regulations.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. RILEY, Jr.
Director of Personnel and Designated Agency Official.

MARCH 25, 1985.

Hon. DAVID H. MARTIN,
Director, Office of Government Ethics,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MARTIN: The purpose of this letter is to describe the steps which I intend to take in order to assure that no conflict of interest will exist between my personal financial interests and the duties I will perform if I am confirmed to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics.

I am currently on leave from my position as a Professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, while serving on an Intergovernmental Personnel Act appointment as Senior Staff Economist for Food and Agriculture at the Council of Economic Advisers. I intend to retain my affiliation with Purdue University, but to remain on a leave of absence without pay, during my period of service as an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. While serving as Assistant Secretary, I pledge that I will participate in no matters arising within the Department involving Purdue University. Upon taking office as Assistant Secretary, I will immediately advise the Secretary of Agriculture and other appropriate officials of the Department, including all officials reporting directly to me, in writing, that no matters involving or affecting Purdue University may be brought to my attention, and that any such matters arising within the Department must be handled by other Department officials.

I also currently serve as a member of the Editorial Council for the American Agricultural Economics Association, and as a Director of the National Bureau for Economic Research. In order to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, I intend to resign from both of these positions upon my confirmation as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

I believe that the steps I have agreed to take, as described above, will assure that no actual or apparent conflict of interest will exist between my personal financial interests and the duties I will perform as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Economics.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. THOMPSON.

PROFILE OF PETER C. MYERS

Peter C. Myers has served as Chief of the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service since April 4, 1982.

Chief Myers was born January 4, 1931, at Racine, Winconsin, and attended Ripon (Wisconsin) College and the University of Wisconsin, majoring in Agronomy and Animal Husbandry. He graduated with honors and was commissioned an officer of the U.S. Army where he served a regular tour of duty as 1st Lieutenant.

Following his army discharge in 1955, Myers began operating his own row crop and livestock farm in the Mississippi Delta area of southern Missouri. He continued full-time farming until becoming SCS chief in April 1982.

During that 27-year period, Myers was continuously active in natural resource management and agricultural activities, including these:

Commissioner of Missouri Department of Conservation (both Fish and Game and Forestry are under this Department);

Advisor to the Governor of Missouri's Soil and Water Commission;

Director of Missouri Cattlemen's Association;

Active member of Missouri Farm Bureau;

Maintained close working relationship with Missouri Agricultural Extension Service and Experiment Station.

Some of Chief Myers' major current management responsibilities include those SCS programs:

Conservation Operations (Technical Assistance to Landowners and Operators);

Emergency Watershed Operations;
Cooperative River Basin Studies;
Flood Prevention Operations;
Great Plains Conservation Program;
Inventory and Monitoring of Natural Resources;
Plant Materials Centers;
Resource Conservation and Development;
Rural Abandoned Mines Program;
Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting;
National Cooperative Soil Survey;
Watershed Planning and Operations.

These SCS programs occur on all major uses of land in the United States—Cropland, Rangeland, Forest Land, Pastureland, and Wildlife Land—and require a full knowledge of their conservation and management requirements.

References: John Powell, Chairman of the Republican Party in Missouri; Governor Bond, Missouri; Governor-Elect Ashcraft, Missouri.

As chief of SCS, Peter Myers has consistently displayed outstanding managerial and leadership abilities.

One of his earliest accomplishments was working closely with Secretary Block and others to develop the Nation's first comprehensive National Soil and Water Conservation Program. His role in getting this job accomplished typifies his commitment to decisive action.

Myers was instrumental in forging a new memorandum of understanding in the fall of 1982 between SCS and USDA-Forest Service. This agreement settled an ongoing controversy on agency responsibilities which had existed since 1974. By coordinating inventory responsibilities and clearly defining technical assistance responsibilities, these two largest USDA agencies are now avoiding duplication of effort and resultant waste of federal funds.

In addition to this and other major memorandums of understanding, Myers administers an annual budget of nearly $600 million. The SCS, under Myers' administration has reached its greatest cost-efficiency operation ever.

During the past 2½ years, Peter Myers has developed a good working relationship with members of Congress and numerous national trade and professional organizations. Myers is highly respected on the Hill as a man of integrity and ability. He is in constant demand as a speaker throughout the country by farm, ranch, and professional agricultural and forestry organizations who are vitally interested in the National Conservation Program. One highlight of 1983 was the National Conservation Roundtable Meeting conducted by Secretary Block on Myers' farm near Matthews, Missouri. Over 30 national agricultural, forestry, and conservation organizations participated in this meeting designed to provide the Secretary with future conservation initiatives.

Myers is an excellent communicator with farmers and ranchers as related to farming and ranching operations, forestry, conservation and commodities. From personal experience, he knows and understands problems that exist to financing and carrying out crop, livestock, and forestry operations. He is bold in pointing out poor agricultural and conservation practices, but also confident in advocating improved practices. For example, he has become an ardent spokesman for conservation tillage as a practice which reduces soil erosion and saves energy.

Peter Myers is a leader who works with people. He has demonstrated exceptional ability to motivate coworkers and subordinates alike to strive for excellence in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. He is a man of patience but also one who is firm and fair.

Peter C. Myers is uniquely qualified to serve as USDA Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

He is a loyal, active Republican who has been very effective in the Republican Party in Missouri and is supporting President Reagan and his Administration. And in doing so, he has earned considerable bipartisan national support within the agricultural community. Pete's leadership and sound judgment is needed in USDA. His appointment as Assistant Secretary would be welcomed heartily by farmers, cattlemen, foresters and a multitude of conservationists across America.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT,
Washington, DC, April 1, 1985.

Hon. JESSE A. HELMS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by Peter C. Myers,[1] who has been nominated by President Reagan for the position of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment.

We have reviewed the report and have also obtained advice from the Department of Agriculture concerning any possible conflict in light of the Department's functions and the nominee's proposed duties. We have attached to the report a letter from Mr. Myers outlining the steps he intends to take in order to avoid the possibility of an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

Based thereon, we believe that Mr. Myers is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

DAVID H. MARTIN, *Director.*

Enclosure.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE,
March 25, 1985.

Hon. DAVID H. MARTIN,
Director, Office of Government Ethics,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. MARTIN: The purpose of this letter is to describe the steps which I intend to take in order to assure that no actual or apparent conflict of interest will exist between my personal financial interests and the duties I will perform if I am confirmed to serve as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment.

I have served since April 1982 as Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, an agency of the Department of Agriculture. In addition, I am a joint owner with my wife of our family farm, comprised of approximately 400 acres of land located in New Madrid County, Missouri. I also own a 30 percent partnership interest in the Myers Megowen and Myers Limited Partnership, which holds title to approximately 500 additional acres of farm land also located in New Madrid County, Missouri. We produce soybeans, grain and hogs on these farms.

In connection with my appointment as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, I pledge that (1) I will abstain from any and all management responsibilities and functions on the above-described farm entities, (2) I will forgo all earned income from these farming operations during my tenure as Assistant Secretary, (3) these farming operations will participate in no USDA farm price support or lending programs during my period of service as Assistant Secretary, and (4) these farming entities will likewise not participate in, and will receive no benefits or assistance under, the programs and activities administered by the USDA Soil Conservation Service. Beginning approximately in August 1985, and during my tenure as Assistant Secretary, these farm entities will be operated by the Myers Farm Limited Partnership, in which I will serve only as a Limited Partner, will play no active management role, and will receive no salary or other similar income. I will, however, receive my share of the cash rents paid by the operating partnership in return for use of my family farm land and the land owned by the Myers Megowen and Myers Limited Partnership, as described above.

I believe that the steps I have agreed to take, as described above, will assure that no actual or apparent conflict of interest will exist between my personal financial interests and the duties I will perform as Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

Sincerely,

PETER C. MYERS, *Chief.*

STATEMENT OF BARRY R. FLAMM, CHIEF FORESTER, THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am Barry R. Flamm, Chief Forester of The Wilderness Society. By way of background, I have extensive experience in natural resource management and policy formulation, particularly with respect

[1] Retained in committee files.

to our national forests. I spent 19 years of my 30-year professional career with the U.S. Forest Service at all levels of the agency, including Forest Supervisor of the Shoshone National Forest. I also served as senior staff for public lands and natural resources for the Council on Environmental Quality during three Presidential administrations, and from 1978 to 1981, I directed the Office of Environmental Quality at USDA.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of The Wilderness Society's 135,000 members in regard to Mr. Myers' confirmation as the Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment. This position has direct line responsibility for the U.S. Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service, and a department-wide mandate to monitor and coordinate environmental policy. Unfortunately, this latter function was eviscerated early in Mr. Crowell's tenure when the Office of Environment Quality was abolished.

The Wilderness Society, celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, is dedicated to the principle of balanced, multiple use on the nation's forests and range lands and to the protection of our wildlands. Since its inception, The Society has maintained a particularly strong interest in the National Forests.

The Wilderness Society strongly opposed the nomination and confirmation of the former Assistant Secretary, John C. Crowell, for his lack of balance on public land issues. However, The Wilderness Society does not oppose Peter C. Myers.

The Society is impressed with Mr. Myers' record at the SCS, especially as it contrasts with the anti-environmental policies and record of the Reagan administration. While John Crowell, then Myers' superior, was shifting Forest Service priorities away from resource protection and stewardship, Myers was able to continue to move the Soil Conservation Service's watershed programs toward better conservation practices. In addition, he has earned a reputation for being an honest and candid administrator.

Although he has limited knowledge and experience with forestry issues and problems, we believe Mr. Myers has the qualifications necessary to implement sound national forest policies. The Society strongly recommends that Mr. Myers become directly involved with Forest Service policy issues and not delegate authority for critical decisions to his deputies. It is very important that he make a clear break with the policies of John Crowell.

I wish to briefly describe five major issues and problems that must be addressed and corrected by Mr. Myers if he is confirmed as the Assistant Secretary.

First, achieve better multiple use management of the national forests through balanced funding. The basic laws guiding the management of the National Forests are found on the principle of multiple use conservation. Yet, the Administration's Forest Service budget requests for FY 1982–86 ignore the requirements of the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act, the National Forest Management Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act. In FY 1986, the resource development and exploitation line items (e.g., timber sales, minerals, grazing) total approximately $600 million. In contrast, the resource stewardship programs (e.g., soil and water, wildlife and fish, recreation and trails, and land acquisition) are allocated one fourth this amount—$170 million.

The Administration's budgets relentlessly push the National Forests toward intensive commodity development and increased environmental degradation, accompanied by ever-diminishing lands for recreation and wildlife and the loss of critical biological diversity. Certainly, timber harvesting and grazing of domestic livestock are important uses of the National Forests. But, a reasonable balance must be achieved in the National Forest budget, emphasizing other equally important, nonexploitive uses.

We believe that a strengthened program for watershed protection, fish and wildlife, cultural resources and recreation, and preservation of natural diversity will significantly increase the National Forests' contribution to the nation. We urge Mr. Myers to develop and support a more balanced Forest Service budget, emphasizing resource protection and stewardship.

Second, reduce and eliminate taxpayer subsidies of commercial interests on the National Forests including mineral development, grazing, and "below-cost" timber sales. The Wilderness Society has been especially concerned about the problems of "below cost" timber sales on the National Forests. We have found, for example, that in 1982, 97 of 119 National Forest administrative units failed to recover timber sale costs with receipts from those sales. We estimate that the taxpayer will lose approximately $190 million in FY86 if the proposed timber program goes forward. Section 6(k) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 mandates that "economic suitability" is an important part of forest planning. Nevertheless, the Forest Service

has yet to address the problem in its current program activities and in the national forest plans being prepared pursuant to NFMA.

We urge Mr. Myers to phase out below cost timber sales and direct the Forest Service to fully implement Section 6(k). Other commodities for which well-defined markets exist—such as minerals and grazing permits—should be priced according to their "fair market" value.

Third, critically examine the Forest Service road construction program, reducing road building that is ecologically damaging and economically unsound. Road building is the single largest contributor to environmental damage in our National Forests. The forest road system already contains 342,000 miles. Ninety-five percent of FY84 funds for roadbuilding was spent on roads needed to access timber; only one percent went to roads for recreation access.

In particular, we are concerned that the Forest Service intends to push forward rapidly to build roads in roadless areas—both areas still under study for wilderness and areas released in last year's wilderness legislation—to remove forever consideration of these areas as wilderness. Our concerns are based on reading the Forest Service's own reports and recently released national forest plans. For example, in the Forest Service's Explanatory Notes on the 1986 budget states that "FRP (forest road program) financed construction will be directed to those areas that provide access into *new* areas" (emphasis added). The Forest Service report "Development Activities in Roadless Non Wilderness" indicates that more than two million board feet of timber is scheduled to be harvested from these areas in FY 1986, destroying the wilderness potential of over one million acres in the year alone.

We recommend Mr. Myers request detailed information from the Forest Service on the number of timber sales, board feet scheduled for cutting, and miles of roads to be built in roadless areas. To continue to road these areas and destroy their wildland characteristics while knowingly taking a financial loss on timber sales defies all notions of common sense. We call upon Mr. Myers to review the Forest Service's plans to road currently unroaded areas and see that sound economic judgment is injected into the decision process.

Fourth, thoroughly examine the influence of "top down" national goals and targets on individual forest plans. Conservationists are concerned that rigid timber harvest and road construction targets set in Washington, D.C. are causing forest planners to select as their preferred alternatives in national forest plans timber harvest levels that are excessively high. This situation seriously jeopardizes other important forest uses and creates irreversible ecological damage. Furthermore, it ignores the ecologically sound concept that land management planning should start at the local forest level.

We urge Mr. Myers to examine this issue. We believe the Agriculture Department should establish a clear policy stating that the forest planning process is not driven by Washington-established goals for timber sales and harvests. If individual forest plans follow this recommendation, several Resource Planning Act program goals will probably need to be adjusted. We urge Mr. Myers to select a RPA program that remedies the imbalance of the present Forest Service program.

Fifth, insist on high quality forest plans that meet the intent of legislation governing the national forests. Mr. Myers should insist that the Forest Service prepare forest plans that meet the requirements of National Forest Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. It is especially important that the forest plans present a full range of alternatives and that the decision-making process encourage public participation. In those states where Congress has not enacted statewide wilderness legislation, Mr. Myers should make certain the Forest Service takes a serious look at the wilderness recommendations in the RARE II restudy and does not simply rubber stamp the seriously flawed RARE II recommendations.

If he is confirmed, The Wilderness Society will welcome the opportunity to work with Mr. Myers in resolving these issues.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY,
NATIONAL CAPITAL OFFICE,
Washington, DC, April 26, 1985.

Re: Nomination of Mr. Peter Myers for Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment.

Senator JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HELMS: The National Audubon Society was unable to be present at the hearings conducted by the Senate Agriculture Committee on April 22nd on the subject of the nomination of Mr. Peter Myers for the post of Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment. However, we do strongly support this nomination, and request that our statement be included in full as a part of the record of these hearings.

The position of Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment is a most important one, one of the most critical positions from an environmental standpoint, in the entire federal government. This is because the Assistant Secretary has direct line responsibility for both the Soil Conservation Service and the U.S. Forest Service, and beyond that, a mandate to coordinate and monitor environmental policy across the entire Department of Agriculture. At stake are 190,000,000 acres of national forests, embracing some of the most superlative scenic and wildlife lands in the nation, and hundreds of millions of acres of farm land, affected by the policies of the Soil Conservation Service.

The National Audubon Society has always sought a true balance of multiple uses on our public lands, and has worked for responsible practices on our nation's farm lands which can protect wildlife while producing the food our nation needs. The policies of the Department of Agriculture in both of these areas are thus extremely important to us, and the qualifications, as well as the personal philosophy of the person who holds the position under consideration today, is of upmost importance to the future health of our national wildlife and non-commodity resources.

The National Audubon Society opposed the nomination of Mr. John Crowell a few years ago because his personal bias in favor of maximum commodity extraction from the national Forests was so obvious and so outspoken that it was plain to us that he was not capable of evaluating the problems of the agencies or of resolving conflicts in a balanced manner. The subsequent public statements and actions of Mr. Crowell bore this out, and the present management policies of the U.S. Forest Service, as enunciated in the proposed Management Plans that are emanating from that agency, seem to reflect Mr. Crowell's heavy emphasis on commodity exploitation and roadbuilding. The budget requests of the Agency, which emphasize the same things, also seem to reflect Mr. Crowell's philosophy.

Mr. Myers, by contrast, had a very balanced and positive record at the Soil Conservation Service. While Mr. Crowell was directing the Forest Service to shift its attention from resource protection and stewardship to commodity exploitation, Mr. Myers by contrast was continuing to move the Soil Conservation Service's watershed programs in the direction of better conservation practices. At the same time, he earned the respect of many for being an honest and candid Administrator.

We have met with Mr. Myers personally and believe that he has the qualifications and the philosophy necessary to implement National Forest policies in the direction of true balanced management, recognizing the equality of all multiple use values, and the primacy of none. It is for these reasons, based on our belief that Mr. Myers is capable of being a fair and balanced administrator, where his predecessor was not, that we support his nomination.

Once Mr. Myers is confirmed, we intend to work closely with him and his staff to correct the following problems in National Forest Management that have arisen during the term of his predecessor. It is still not too late to rectify this situation if strong action is taken.

First, there has been too much "top down" planning and goal setting. There has been increasing evidence in recent years that road construction and timber cutting are set in Washington, D.C., and are forcing local forest planners to select as their "preferred alternative" timber cutting levels that are far too high to be sustained with any semblance of multiple use. Land management planning should begin at the local forest level, and be based upon the caring capacity of the land, taking into account all of the multiple use values—not just those of the board feet and the standing trees. Mr. Myers should carefully examine this question, and make it plain that the amount of the logging in the public forests cannot be driven by political

directives from far off, but must be based upon the carrying capacity of the land, and the needs of other resources as well.

The whole question of below cost timber sales must be reexamined. It is well known that for years, the Forest Service has, in effect, susidized the forest products industry through the device of "deficit sales," that is timber sale whose total cost to the government far exceeds the revenues from sale of the timber. The results have been that taxpayers have paid outright either with their dollars, or with their trees (through purchaser credits), for the privilege of having highly damaging roads thrust deep into the heart of prized wild areas, or sensitive areas which are extremely important for watershed and recreation purposes. A large majority of Forest Service administrative units have failed to recover timber sale costs from timber sales, and the situation is rapidly approaching scandalous proportions.

The whole Forest Service road building program should be reexamined. This system, already 342,000 miles in extent, is being proposed for a doubling or tripling, if current proposed plans are adopted. This will result in intolerable losses to the other multiple use values of the forests, as well as cost the taxpayers enormous sums. We particularly are concerned that the unfortunate practice followed by the Forest Service in the West since World War II of "Wilderness preventative logging," will be accelerated before Congress has had a chance to make decisions about the new fate of certain areas highly prized for their wild land value. The new Assistant Secretary should in particular demand an examination of this practice, and require the Forest Service to furnish him with figures and numbers indicating which roadless areas are planning to be entered, and to what extent.

The budget situation of the national forests should be more balanced. Under the terms of the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, the Rangeland Forest Planning Act of 1974, and the Forest Management Act of 1976, the U.S. Forest Service is required to follow basic principles of multiple use. To us this has always meant that no one single use has absolute primacy over any other, all the time.

This policy has never been followed, because each budget year the Forest Service continually requests three to four times as much money for resource and exploitation line items as it does for stewardship programs.

We have always believed that the national forests, while they clearly can produce commodity resources which are needed, should concentrate on providing those resources that the private sector cannot or will not produce: resources such as high quality timber instead of pulp wood, pure water, trophy game animals, solitude, and high quality recreation experiences in an unspoiled setting.

Under present Forest Service plans and policies, as time goes on the vast populations of the future will find fewer and fewer islands of such peace in our public foresters to have such experiences or to find such resources. Mr. Myers has the opportunity now to reverse this trend.

We are pleased to support the nomination of Mr. Peter Myers and stand ready to work with him at all levels and in every way possible to achieve the goal of sound, balanced, real multiple use management of our National Forests.

Sincerely,

BROCK EVANS,
Vice President for National Issues.

NATIONAL PORK PRODUCERS COUNCIL,
WASHINGTON OFFICE,
Washington, DC, January 17, 1985.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HELMS: The National Pork Producers Council strongly recommends the confirmation of Peter Myers for the Assistant Secretary, Natural Resoruces and Environment position at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Myers continues to show the leadership ability that he once excerted as an officer of the Missouri Pork Producers Association.

He has shown resourcefulness in his position as Chief of the Soil Conservation Service. The National Pork Producers Council believes Mr. Myers has the experience and knowledge to give new insight, depth, and leaderhip to the appointed position. Mr. Myers assets make him an obvious choice for the Assistant Secretary position.

NPPC encourages an expedient approval of Mr. Myers by your Committee.

Sincerely,

ORVILLE K. SWEET,
Executive Vice President.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES,
April 25, 1985.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I was unfortunately not able to be present for your committee's hearings on the nomination of Peter Myers for the post of Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, so I am conveying to you in this way the stong endorsement and support of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for his confirmation.

I think you already know that this Association consists of the fish and wildlife managing agencies of the states, provinces and federal governments of the United States, Canada and Mexico. All 50 states, along with Puerto Rico, are members.

Because it is important that we work with all elected and appointed officials in our area of interest, it is rare indeed that we become involved in an individual confirmation proceeding. We make an exception in the case of Mr. Myers because he is a former chairman of the Missouri Conservation Commission and we are familiar with the professional and competent manner in which he approached his responsibilities in that position. We are also aware that he practices and applies conservation measures on his own family farm. And, since his appointment as Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, we have had the opportunity of working closely with him. We have observed his determination to encourage sound practices, to create an awareness of the problems of soil erosion and a recognition of the need to take corrective actions.

We believe Mr. Myers to be a capable and competent administrator. He is a good cooperator and fair in his judgments. He is a proponent of sound, balanced use management of our natural resources.

Our Association for these reasons, takes pleasure in recommending his appointment to the post of Assistant Secretary. We thank you for considering our views and hope your committee will support that nomination favorably to the full Senate.

Sincerely,

JACK H. BERRYMAN,
Executive Vice-President.

AMERICAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, April 17, 1985.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HELMS: This letter is to express the strong support of the American Forestry Association for the speedy Senate confirmation of Peter C. Myers as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment. We regret that out-of-town commitments make it impossible to appear in person before your Committee to support this nomination.

Mr. Myers has, in his term as SCS Chief, demonstrated an outstanding capacity for honorable public service. He is dedicated to doing the right thing in all that he does, and has pursued the nation's soil conservation program with vigor and skill. He has shown excellent management skills, and the staff morale and productivity at the Soil Conservation Service has thrived under his leadership.

We in AFA welcome the opportunity to deal with Mr. Myers in a position of policy responsibility for forestry as well as soil conservation. We feel his open-minded approach to all views, coupled with his willingness to move forward with hard decisions when the facts are in, will serve the Secretary, the President, and the people of the Nation very well.

We are not aware of the reasons for the long delay in getting the nomination up to your committee for consideration, Mr. Helms, but hope that you will now move for a speedy confirmation. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

NEIL SAMPSON,
Executive Vice President.

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